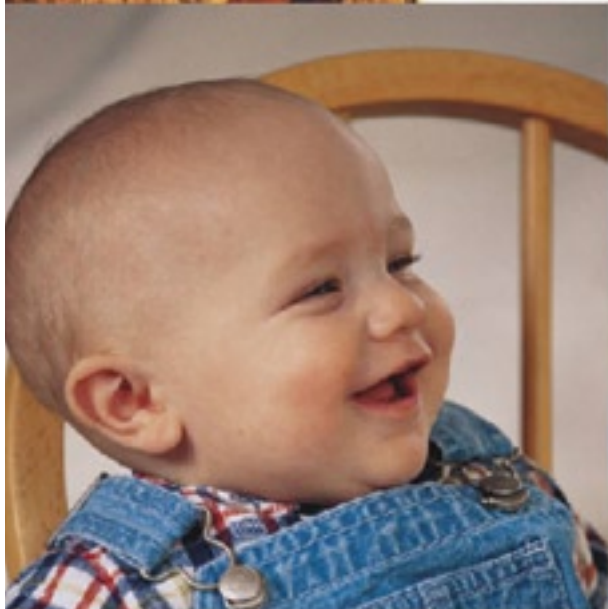




2005 Annual Report

Citizen Foster Care Review Board



Working for Kentucky's Future ... Our Children



*Kentucky's foster children benefit
from the work of the
Citizen Foster Care Review Board*

There are more than 520,000 children in our nation's foster care system, with 6,600 of those children residing in Kentucky. Citizen Foster Care Review Boards play an important role in providing for the safety, permanency and well-being of these children.

Mandated by state statute, Citizen Foster Care Review Board volunteers regularly review the case of every child during his or her commitment to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. During the past year, 142 Citizen Foster Care Review Boards conducted 22,364 case reviews of children in out-of-home care. The Administrative Office of the Courts, which oversees the CFCRB program, continues to support this most important endeavor.

I invite you to read the 2005 Annual Report of the Citizen Foster Care Review Board for an in-depth look at how children are faring in Kentucky's foster care system. I also extend my appreciation to the nearly 800 CFCRB volunteers for contributing their valuable time and energy to children who deserve the opportunity to lead full, productive lives.

*Joseph E. Lambert
Chief Justice of Kentucky*

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Highlights & Summary FY 2005

July 1, 2004 – June 30, 2005

Patrick Yewell

*General Manager, Department of Juvenile Services
Administrative Office of the Courts*

The Citizen Foster Care Review Board's strong tradition of success continued throughout Fiscal Year 2005. The 2005 CFCRB Annual Report gives us the opportunity to review last year's accomplishments, measure where we are and plan for the future. I truly believe that CFCRB volunteers continue to make a positive difference in the lives of the 6,600 Kentucky children currently in out-of-home care.

Impressive Statistics

The results from FY 2005 are impressive: Over the course of 1,087 board meetings, CFCRB volunteers conducted 22,364 reviews of 9,058 individual children as they entered and exited the state's care. We also learned that the volunteers are becoming more effective. The 774 CFCRB volunteers conducted more than twice the number of reviews they carried out 10 years ago. And another important statistic showed that 84.7 percent of volunteers agreed with the permanency goal selected by the Cabinet for Health and Family Services and approved by the court.

"Strong Local Boards"

An undertaking this massive can be primarily attributed to the work of "Strong Local Boards," which was the theme that 2005 State Chair Angie Funk set for her administration. The volunteers who serve as regional representatives accepted the challenge and became more involved. Local board members also took advantage of regional training sessions and the 2004 CFCRB State Conference in Owensboro to network, earn continuing training credits and share best practices.

Court Improvement Project

The Citizen Foster Care Review Boards

also participated in the Court Improvement Project Reassessment, a study of the state's juvenile system conducted by the University of Kentucky. We were greatly encouraged when the study confirmed that the vast majority of judges do, in fact, read and rely on findings and recommendations presented by CFCRB reviewers. Volunteers statewide have embraced Interested Party Reviews as a way to enhance the review process.

Teamwork With the CHFS

Another exciting development is a closer collaboration between the CFCRBs and the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. This teamwork ranged from social service worker and cross-professional trainings to the 2005 Adoption Day initiative in which reviewers at Family Court sites helped expedite permanency and finalize adoptions for 117 children.

Better Field Work, New Tracking System

The Dependent Children's Services Division of the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) has strengthened its assistance to boards statewide. We have improved our field coordinators' ability to work with local boards and produced a state-of-the-art tracking system through the hard work of our Information Systems staff and the CFCRB committees. In the process, we created a new auto-fill form that facilitates the review process by freeing up time for in-depth case reviews.

The AOC commends the CFCRB volunteers for their work on behalf of Kentucky's children. They are helping some of our most vulnerable citizens find safe homes where they can reach their full potential.

Citizen Foster Care Review Boards: An Overview

Kentucky law recognizes that children have certain fundamental rights, including the right to adequate food, clothing and shelter, the right to be free from physical, sexual or emotional injury, the right to educational instruction, and the right to a secure and stable family.

Unfortunately, when a child's parents or guardians fail to protect and ensure these rights, it may become necessary to remove a child from his or her home. As a result, the child may be ordered into the custody and commitment of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (Cabinet) through dependency, neglect and abuse actions brought before the state's Circuit Court/Family Division and District Court. Currently, more than 6,600 Kentucky children reside in state custody.

Citizen Foster Care Review Boards (CFCRB) have been mandated under KRS 620 to conduct an in-depth case review of every child that is committed to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Under KRS 620.270, CFCRBs are required to review the case of each child who is placed in the custody of the Cabinet by a court order of commitment in the county or

counties in which the board serves. These reviews must occur at least once every six months or until the child is released from his or her commitment to the Cabinet. The board makes recommendations to the referring judge through its review of the child in foster care. Copies of reviews become part of the child's court case file and Cabinet case file.

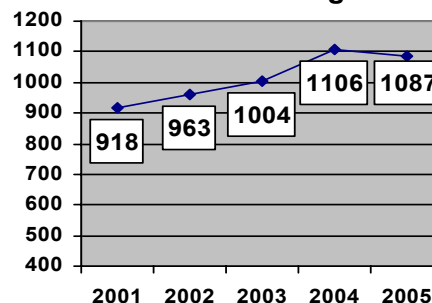
While KRS 620 requires boards to meet at least quarterly, most boards hold monthly meetings. Each CFCRB must consist of at least three members who volunteer their time to this endeavor.

All volunteer reviewers must complete an initial training session to become certified. After the first year of service, reviewers must obtain a minimum of six continuing training hours annually. The Dependent Children's Services Division of the Administrative Office of the Courts recruits and trains CFCRB volunteers, and provides administrative oversight to the program.

The duties of the CFCRB are to:

- ▶ Establish, approve and provide training programs for board members.
- ▶ Review and coordinate the activities of local boards.

Number of Board Meetings



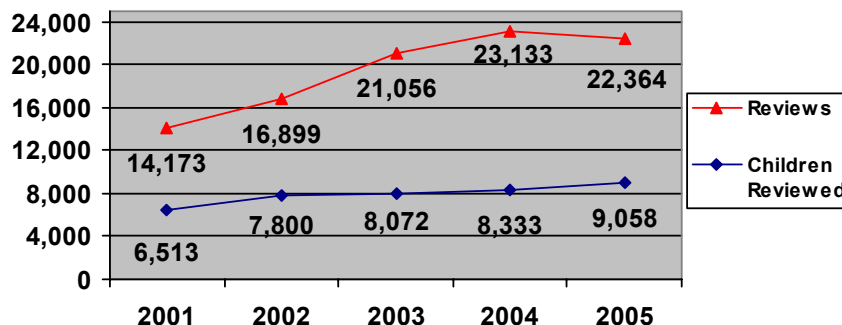
- ▶ Establish reporting procedures and compile data collected by local boards, including how the needs of children are being met, the number of times children are moved, the reasons for the move, the average length of time in care, information on sibling visitation, and the total number and frequency of reviews.
- ▶ Publish an annual report on the effectiveness of local boards.
- ▶ Evaluate and make annual recommendations to the

What is a case review?

Case reviews occur when:

CFCRB volunteers review the Cabinet for Health and Family Services case file and make findings and recommendations regarding the safety, well-being and permanency of children who are in out of home care. These findings and recommendations are then provided to the District or Family Court judge assigned to that child's case.

Number of Reviews/Number of Children Reviewed



Kentucky Citizen Foster Care Review Boards: An Overview continued

Supreme Court of Kentucky, the Office of Governor and the Legislative Research Commission regarding the laws of the Commonwealth, practices, policies and procedures affecting children in out-of-home placement.

CFCRB volunteers review the case files of thousands of children each year. These reviews provide valuable case information and recommendations to the judges overseeing the cases. CFCRB reviews become part of court record and the Cabinet for Health and Family Services' case file.

The CFCRB volunteers have been trained extensively on child protection law and social work practice. These volunteers are a powerful voice for all children, both on an individual case level and on a state level.

As noted in the chart below, the Division of Dependent Children's Services conducted initial trainings and chair/vice-chair trainings throughout the state to reach as many volunteers as possible.

Initial Training Sessions

Date	Location	Volunteers Attending
July 17, 2004	Louisville	11
August 6, 2004	Paducah	11
September 11, 2004	Paintsville	15
September 23, 2004	Richmond	6
September 25, 2004	Columbia	9
October 2, 2004	Owensboro	10
October 2, 2004	Frankfort	26
October 23, 2004	Bowling Green	7
November 13, 2004	Louisville	19
February 5, 2005	Lawrence County	8
February 12, 2005	Bowling Green	8
February 19, 2005	Frankfort	26
February 23, 2005	Paducah	9
February 24, 2005	Pineville	1
March 5, 2005	Boyd	25
May 11, 2005	Magoffin County	9
May 12, 2005	Bell County	3
May 27, 2005	Breathitt County	7
June 4, 2005	Louisville	7
June 11, 2005	Blue Licks State Park	11
June 22, 2005	Paducah	8
Total		211

Chair & Vice Chair Training Sessions

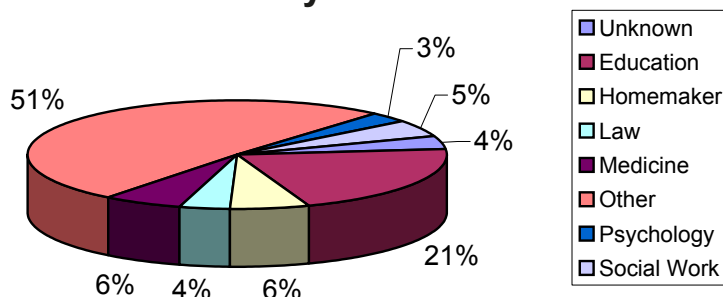
Date	Location	Volunteers Attending
March 19, 2005	Frankfort	19
April 13, 2005	Prestonsburg	4
April 23, 2005	Hopkinsville	11
April 30, 2005	Glasgow	15
Total		49

Profile of the CFCRB Volunteer Base

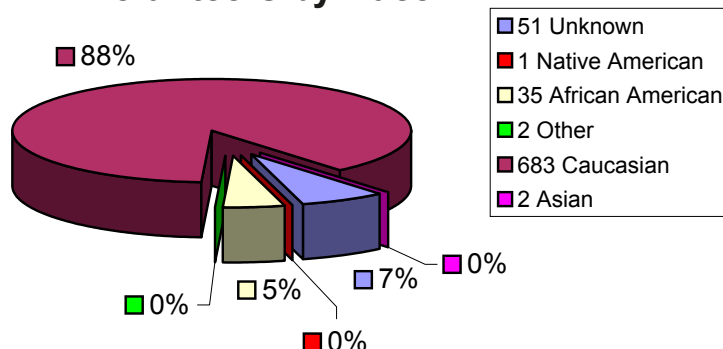
As of June 30, 2005, the membership of the Kentucky Citizen Foster Care Review Board had climbed to 774 volunteers statewide. The following information illustrates the diversity and composition of the volunteer reviewers:

- Out of the 774 volunteers, 300 (39 percent) come from the professions of law, medicine, psychology, social work and education.
- The CFCRB consists of volunteers who are 20 to 87 years of age. The current average age of a volunteer is 45; the average age two years ago was 50.
- Caucasians constitute 88 percent of the volunteer base while African Americans make up 5 percent of the volunteer base. The remaining 7 percent of volunteers are Native American, Asian, or their race has not been reported.
- The volunteer base is 83 percent female and 17 percent male.
- Active volunteers have served on Citizen Foster Care Review Boards for an average of 5 years (60.80 months of service), which demonstrates their long-term commitment.
- In 85 percent of all cases reviewed, volunteers agreed with the permanency goal set by the Cabinet and approved by the court.
- Volunteers agreed with the permanency plan for the child 85 percent of the time.

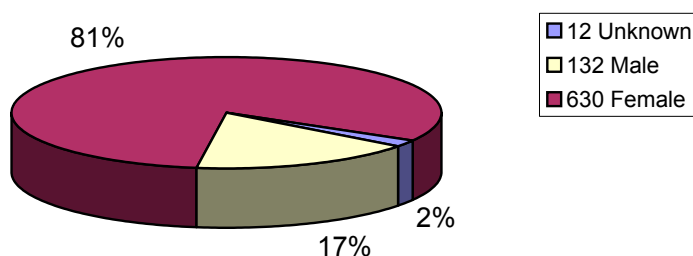
Volunteers by Profession



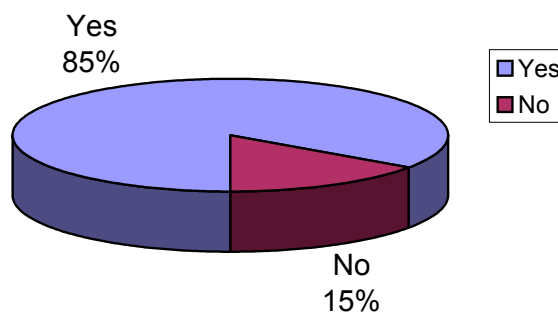
Volunteers by Race



Volunteers by Gender



Volunteer Agreement With Permanency Goal



CFCRB Activity Summary for Fiscal Year 2005

Boards and Reviews								
	# of Reviews	# of Children Reviewed	# of Board Meetings		# of Reviews	# of Children Reviewed	# of Board Meetings	
Board Name				Board Name				
Adair	19	12	4	Jefferson 9	181	67	11	
Adair/Casey	40	36	2	Jefferson 10	202	73	12	
Allen	78	36	5	Jessamine	204	83	9	
Anderson	85	35	5	Johnson	151	58	10	
Ballard/Carlisle	39	15	4	Kenton A	233	99	11	
Barren	213	92	12	Kenton B	344	171	8	
Bath/Menifee	85	36	6	Kenton C	372	131	10	
Bell	59	49	3	Kenton D	245	117	8	
Boone/Gallatin	366	85	11	Kenton E	397	151	12	
Bourbon	143	47	9	Knott	72	50	4	
Boyd	506	175	12	Knox	106	72	8	
Boyle	196	77	12	Larue	43	17	3	
Bracken/Robertson	74	30	4	Laurel	190	97	5	
Breathitt	59	36	4	Laurel B	97	48	6	
Breckinridge	74	51	5	Lawrence	90	37	7	
Bullitt	170	75	5	Lee/Owsley	71	30	8	
Butler	94	36	7	Leslie	42	24	3	
Caldwell	26	15	3	Letcher	113	56	5	
Calloway	174	79	6	Lewis	39	16	5	
Campbell A	211	86	11	Lincoln	156	94	8	
Campbell B	256	93	12	Livingston	14	7	3	
Carter	158	55	10	Logan	80	43	5	
Casey	18	16	1	Lyon	15	4	5	
Christian A	95	37	10	Madison A	177	87	9	
Christian C	94	43	8	Madison B	250	85	11	
Clark	142	57	8	Magoffin	105	54	6	
Clay	131	67	10	Marion/Washington	100	37	6	
Clinton	42	19	4	Marshall	106	51	5	
Crittenden	23	7	4	Martin	89	31	6	
Cumberland	1	1	1	Mason	57	27	4	
Daviess A	249	127	11	McCracken A	368	79	11	
Daviess B	278	124	12	McCracken B	271	86	11	
Edmonson	80	39	5	McCreary	252	140	11	
Elliott	61	17	6	McLean	77	29	6	
Estill	100	44	6	Meade	63	27	6	
Fayette A	276	85	10	Mercer	151	78	11	
Fayette B	313	84	11	Metcalfe	62	28	6	
Fayette C	247	91	11	Monroe	65	21	4	
Fayette D	226	77	11	Montgomery	60	24	4	
Fayette E	187	66	7	Morgan	76	23	6	
Fayette F	250	88	11	Muhlenberg	127	44	6	
Fayette G	321	105	12	Nelson	140	48	6	
Fayette H	281	90	8	Nicholas	17	12	2	
Fayette I	303	94	11	Ohio	130	69	6	
Fleming	83	41	4	Oldham	92	25	10	
Floyd	128	45	7	Owen/Carroll	114	32	11	
Franklin	238	87	9	Perry	357	175	11	
Fulton/Hickman	80	40	6	Pike	195	82	10	
Garrard	39	16	5	Powell	143	31	9	
Grant	104	30	10	Pulaski A	163	87	11	
Graves	143	58	12	Pulaski B	138	84	12	
Grayson	229	94	11	Rockcastle	156	91	6	
Green	38	16	4	Rowan	101	45	12	
Greenup	209	58	11	Russell	65	36	4	
Hancock	44	11	7	Scott	233	101	9	
Hardin A	217	94	11	Shelby	251	116	9	
Hardin B	242	112	10	Simpson	94	48	4	
Harlan	146	76	10	Spencer	47	17	5	
Harrison/Pendleton	108	42	4	Taylor	52	24	4	
Hart	87	42	4	Todd	34	18	4	
Henderson	139	74	9	Trigg	55	18	5	
Henry	101	38	5	Trimble	50	23	4	
Hopkins	205	105	12	Union	32	10	4	
Jackson	43	28	3	Warren A	275	136	11	
Jefferson 1	447	128	12	Warren B	282	136	12	
Jefferson 2	377	147	11	Wayne	38	21	4	
Jefferson 3	429	126	12	Webster	46	18	4	
Jefferson 4	435	165	12	Whitley A - Corbin	109	67	5	
Jefferson 5	445	154	12	Whitley B - Williamsburg	104	56	4	
Jefferson 6	538	188	12	Wolfe	40	12	6	
Jefferson 7	354	130	12	Woodford	100	37	9	
Jefferson 8	307	113	12	TOTAL	22364	9058	1087	

CFCRB Summary of Findings:

How Foster Children Fare in Kentucky

According to Kentucky statute, review boards are required to review at least once every six months the cases of all children who are in the custody of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services due to abuse, neglect and dependency. The following statistics pertain to the children reviewed by Citizen Foster Care Review Boards during FY 2005. When applicable, longitudinal data highlights historical trends relating to permanency for children. Findings are divided into three sections: Demographics, Permanency and Stability, and Service Delivery.

National and State Demographics

Foster Children: A National Profile

There are more than 500,000 children in foster care in the United States. Fifty-two percent are male and 48 percent are female. The median age of a child in foster care is 10.6 years. Thirty-eight percent are African American/non-Hispanic, 37 percent are Caucasian, 17 percent are Hispanic and 8 percent are other races/ethnic origins.¹

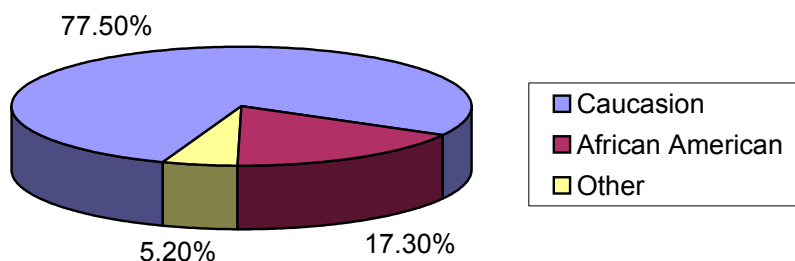
Foster Children: A Kentucky Profile

According to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, there are more than 6,600 children in foster care in Kentucky. Over the course of the fiscal year, Citizen Foster Care Review Boards reviewed the case files of 9,058 individual children, which illustrates the number of children who enter and exit care over the course of the year.

Based on a sampling of CFCBRB reviews, 50.2 percent of active foster children (those still in care) are females and 49.8 percent are males.²

The racial composition shows that 77.5 percent of foster children are Caucasian, 17.3 percent are African American and the remaining 5.2 percent are other races. African-American youth are disproportionately represented in Kentucky's foster care system. They make up just 9 percent of Kentucky's juvenile population yet constitute 17.3 percent of all the children that were reviewed during the past year.

Race Profile of Kentucky Children in Foster Care



¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS Report #10). Preliminary FY 2003 estimates as of April 2005.

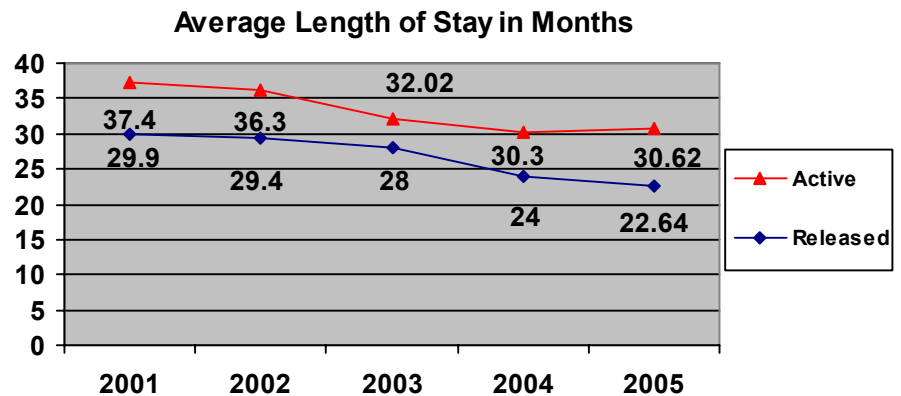
² This data was obtained through a sampling of actual CFCRB reviews conducted by volunteers.

Permanency and Stability

According to the most recent Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) report published by the Administration for Children and Families in 2003, children in foster care in the United States in 2001 had been in care for an average of 33 months. More than 17 percent of children had been in care for five years or more. However, a trend is emerging of children attaining permanency faster in Kentucky.

Less Time to Permanency in Kentucky

- Active³ children in foster care in Kentucky spend an average of 30.6 months in care. While this figure is relatively the same as in 2004 (30.3 months), it demonstrates a continued decrease in the average length of stay over the past five years.
- Inactive children spent an average of 22.64 months in foster care. This demonstrates a decrease of approximately a month and a half from last year, which is an improvement.
- The average length of time children spend in foster care in Kentucky has decreased 7 months over the past 5 years.



Average Length of Stay in Months

Inactive (Released) Children

Age	Months	Date of Birth
0-5	14.47	1/1/00 - 12/31/05
6-10	19.67	1/1/95 - 12/31/99
11-15	22.19	1/1/90 - 12/31/94
Over 15	36.30	< 1/1/90
Average	22.64	

Active Children

Age	Months	Date of Birth
0-5	15.36	1/1/00 - 12/31/05
6-10	23.35	1/1/95 - 12/31/99
11-15	35.31	1/1/90 - 12/31/94
Over 15	46.04	< 1/1/90
Average	30.62	

- The overall average length of stay for all children in foster care was 26.63 months.⁴
- Children who are over 15 years old have spent an average of 41.17 months in foster care. Children who are 5 years old or younger have spent an average of 14.92 months in foster care. As age increases, so does length of stay.

³ Statistics pertain to all the children whose cases were reviewed between July 1, 2004, and June 30, 2005. "Active" cases reviewed by the CFCRB during the course of the fiscal year represent those children who entered care and were still in care on June 30, 2005. "Inactive" or "released" cases reviewed by the CFCRB during the course of the fiscal year represent those children who were released at any time between July 1, 2004, and June 30, 2005.

⁴ The Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 requires that termination of parental rights petitions be filed on behalf of children who have been in foster care for 15 of the last 22 months, unless certain conditions exist.

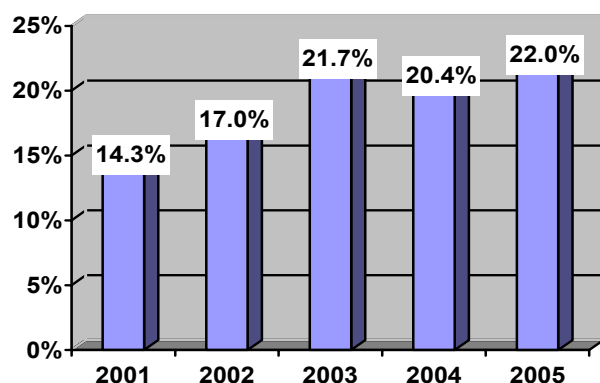
Permanency and Stability continued

How Children Exit From Foster Care

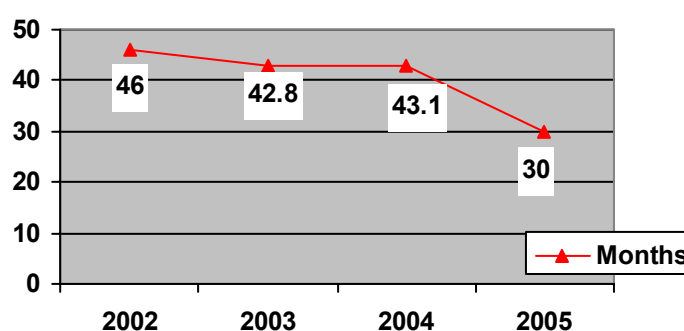
Parent(s)	Relative(s)	Adoption	Other Guardian	Aged Out	Independent Living	Unknown/No Reason Specified
38%	19%	22%	2%	9%	1%	9%

- Children who were released from out-of-home care during FY 2005 were released to their parents 38 percent of the time.
- In 2005, 22 percent of Kentucky's foster care children exited care to a finalized adoption, an increase over the 20.4 percent in FY 2004.⁵

Adoptions

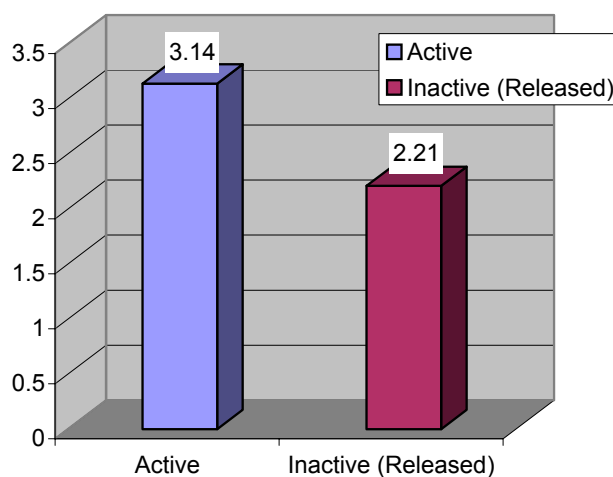


Length of Time to Finalized Adoption



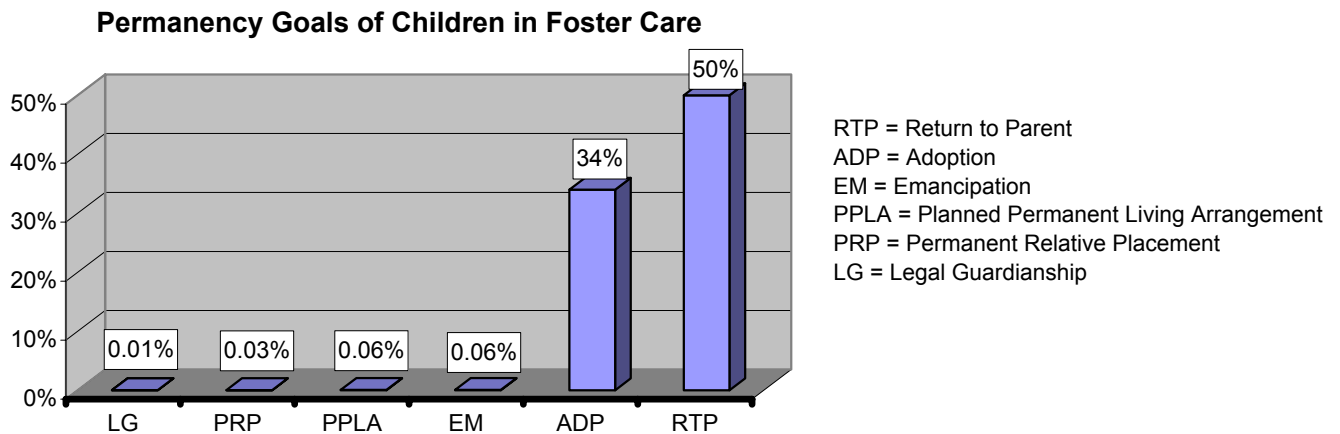
- The average number of placements varied depending upon whether the child was "active" or "inactive." Active children are those who were still in state custody on June 30, 2005. Inactive children are those who had been in state custody but were released during FY 2005.
- Inactive, or released children, experienced fewer placements than the children whose cases remained active at the close of FY 2005.
- There was a decrease in the average number of placements experienced by all children reviewed. In FY 2004, children averaged a total of 3.7 placements while in foster care, while children averaged 2.67 placements during FY 2005.

Average Number of Placements



⁵ The national standard set forth in the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) is that 32 percent of children exiting care to adoption will do so in less than 24 months.

Permanency and Stability continued



Summary of Volunteer Findings Based Upon a Sampling of Reviews

- Reviewers reported that 3.8 percent of the children reviewed changed placements more than three times in six months prior to their review.
- Reviewers reported that the placement log was not in 16.6 percent of the CHFS case files.
- Reviewers cited many reasons for placement changes, including finding an appropriate relative, sibling placement, health, a change in the permanency plan and behavior problems. The most commonly reported reason for moves was the need for "more structure."
- Reviewers reported that if children have siblings, they visit with them over 99 percent of the time.
- Reviewers reported that the permanency hearing had been held or was scheduled on or before the appropriate due date for 94 percent of the children.
- Reviewers reported that the parent(s) did not sign the most recent out-of-home case plan for 50.2 percent of the children reviewed.
- At the time of the review, reviewers are asked if the social worker had changed since the last review. Reviewers reported that 20.2 percent of the time the social worker had changed since the last review.



CFCRB State Highlights

2004 State Conference

The 2004 Citizen Foster Care Review Board State Conference in Owensboro Nov. 5-7 drew the largest attendance in the 10-year history of the event. Volunteers from Martin County in the east and McCracken County in the west to Kenton County in the north and Whitley County in the south came to the Executive Inn Rivermont to participate in a variety of training workshops.

The conference opened with a Committee Fair. Each of the standing committees provided information about its role within the CFCRB and took the opportunity to recruit new volunteers. The Executive Committee approved the new volunteers later in the weekend. Following the Committee Fair, Regional Roundtables were held to discuss issues and concerns expressed by the volunteers. Moderators recorded the issues and passed them on to the appropriate parties to be dealt with when the conference concluded.

The 18th Volunteer Recognition Banquet took place the first evening. In addition to the award recipients, 56 volunteers received a Lifetime Achievement Award for their longtime dedication to the CFCRB program. These volunteers joined

the Kentucky CFCRB between 1983 and 1990, and have served continuously on their local boards.

The second day was filled with workshops and seminars that were well received by all who attended.

The volunteers appreciated a surprise visit from country music star Jimmy Wayne at the general membership meeting. Many of the local Citizen Foster Care Boards contributed beautiful gift baskets filled with items from their home counties.

Overall, the volunteers enjoyed the entire weekend, which was filled with information and opportunities to network with CFCRB colleagues. Volunteers were able to meet many of their fellow reviewers from across the state and share information about the operation of the local boards.



2005 Adoption Day results in 117 adoptions statewide

A challenge from Chief Justice Joseph E. Lambert to Family Court resulted in Kentucky's first statewide adoption day in June 2005.

"This event resulted in 117 adoptions being finalized throughout Kentucky during the first week in June," said Patrick Yewell, general manager of the AOC Juvenile Services Department. "Adoption changes lives in a wonderful way and we are very pleased with the outcome of Adoption Day 2005. When parents and children come together to form a family, it is something to celebrate."

Chief Justice Lambert's goal was for Kentucky to complete as many adoptions as possible during one week while raising awareness about children in foster care.

Collaboration was vital to carrying out the first

Adoption Day. The Administrative Office of the Courts, the Citizen Foster Care Review Boards and the Cabinet for Health and Family Services teamed up to ensure a successful event. Perhaps

most importantly, planning for Adoption Day led many jurisdictions to examine and discuss the entire adoption process. As a result, they are developing procedures to streamline the adoption process in their communities.

CFCRB volunteers took an active role in Adoption Day activities. Local volunteers met with judges and Cabinet

staff, initiated community involvement in local events, and held receptions, luncheons and other celebrations for the adoptive families.



Adoptive families gathered in Hardin County to celebrate Adoption Day 2005.

New CATS system will improve tracking of CFCRB data

A new data management information system — the Children’s Automated Tracking System (CATS) — was developed during 2004 and 2005, and officially launched Oct. 4, 2005.

This new system will greatly improve the ability of the Dependent Children’s Services Division to track CFCRB data. The CATS system was created to provide case information that will assist the Administrative Office of the Courts, judges, Citizen Foster Care Review Boards and Cabinet for Health and Family Services staff in decision-making for individual cases.

CATS will also help fulfill statutory reporting requirements that specify what data is to be reported to the legislature, the chief justice and governor by the Administrative Office of the Courts on the behalf of Citizen Foster Care Review Board. This data will highlight areas that need to be improved in handling abuse, neglect and dependency proceedings, including the timely filing of termination of parental rights petitions, permanency hearings and placement stability.

The new system will also help ensure that every child who is in state custody is given the

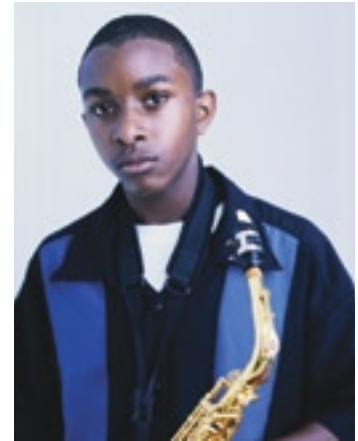
opportunity for his or her case to be reviewed by a local Citizen Foster Care Review Board.

The system also allows volunteers to receive more timely notification of cases to be reviewed.

This notification is statutorily required to be provided to the Administrative Office of the Courts by the Cabinet for Health and Family Services

via case plans sent in the mail, which historically has not always happened for every case.

A new Findings and Recommendation Form has been created for use in conjunction with CATS. The benefit of the new form, which is already in use, is that auto-filled information allows the reviewer to concentrate on more substantive issues in the cases. Information that does not change from review to review will be auto-filled by the new computer system.



Interested Party Review Pilot Project

In FY 2005, the Citizen Foster Care Review Board took part in the Court Improvement Project Reassessment, a study of the state’s juvenile system conducted by the University of Kentucky. The study confirmed that the majority of judges read and rely on findings and recommendations presented by CFCRB reviewers. Volunteers statewide have embraced Interested Party

Reviews as a way to enhance the review process.

The reassessment study took place as part of the Interested Party Review Pilot Project (IPR), sponsored by the Dependent Children’s Services Division of the Administrative Office of the Courts. Dependent Children’s Services, which provides administrative support to Kentucky’s Citizen Foster Care Review Boards, recruited volunteers to participate in this valuable project.

CFCRB volunteers are recruited from the Cabinet for Health and Family Service’s service regions to serve on a regional IPR board. The coverage area of each IPR board coincides with one of the Cabinet’s service regions. The IPR boards meet for one full business day each month to review cases of the children who have been committed to the Cabinet within the respective service region.



Interested Party Review Pilot Project continued

The Interested Party Review Pilot Project shares the goals and ideals of the Citizen Foster Care Review Board. During the reviews, the IPR volunteers focus on the case plans of the parents and children.

The IPR volunteers use the same information that the local CFCRB uses for case reviews, such as the current case plan, current service recordings, Continuous Quality Assessment and placement log. They use this material to conduct an interactive review that includes the parties involved as well as other interested parties (defined below). Interested parties provide a wealth of information about the progress of the cases being reviewed.

Interested Parties

Interested parties are able to contribute their unique perspective regarding the progress of the case. Interested parties who are invited to attend individual case reviews include, but are not limited to:

- The parents of children whose cases are being reviewed
- Attorneys representing the parents
- Guardians *ad litem*
- Cabinet for Health and Family Services' case workers and supervisors
- Mental health professionals involved in the case
- Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)
- Foster parents



- Others who have an interest in the child's case

The IPR volunteers produce a report and submit it to the judge involved in the case. The reviews provide valuable information for judges to use during annual permanency hearings. These comprehensive reports help Kentucky's dependent children move toward permanency at a faster pace.

Case Selection

Case selection is most frequently determined by using standardized criteria. Those who are reviewed include children (and any siblings) placed in out-of-home care who are under age 10, who have been in state custody for at least nine months and whose goal is return to parent. This criteria targets a population of children who are at higher risk for lingering in the custody of the state.

The Interested Party Review Pilot Project continues to expand statewide. Comprehensive training is conducted for the CFCRB volunteers who participate.

Interested Party Review Training Totals		
Date	Location	# of Attendees
Aug. 21, 2004	Bowling Green	8
Feb. 5, 2005	Hopkinsville	6
Feb. 19, 2005	Owensboro	15
March 5, 2005	Elizabethtown	7
	TOTAL	36

Volunteer Activities & Initiatives

In addition to conducting 22,364 case reviews of 9,058 individual children in Kentucky's foster care system in FY 2005, CFCRB volunteers strengthened the organization by carrying out several key initiatives, which are highlighted below:

- The successful 2004 Citizen Foster Care Review Board State Conference, Kids – 1st in Kentucky, took place in Owensboro.
- A Resource Lending Library is being finalized to provide educational opportunities to help volunteers achieve their training hours.
- The Winter 2005 CFCRB newsletter featured the volunteers who received Lifetime Achievement Awards at the 2004 State Conference. Lifetime achievement awards recognize volunteers who have devoted more than a decade of service to Kentucky's children.
- The Public Relations Subcommittee continues to use the newsletter to spotlight trainings, activities and accomplishments.
- The CFCRB Web page at www.kycourts.net has been updated to make it easier for prospective volunteers to gather information and to submit an application.
- Inconsistent Cabinet for Health and Family Services practices were identified throughout the state and brought to the attention of the commissioner of the Department for Community Based Services when AOC staff and the CFCRB state chair conducted their quarterly meetings with him.
- Efforts continue to identify and build alliances with other child advocacy groups in the state that address children's issues.



- The new Children's Automated Tracking System (CATS) was developed along with a revised Findings and Recommendations Form that is partially auto-filled with court information.
- CFCRB brochures, posters, bookmarks and other community outreach materials have been updated to reflect the new CFCRB logo.



- Each CFCRB chair was sent a ballot to vote on the retention of the state chair and vice chair as required by statute. The outcome (the state chair and vice-chair were retained) was announced at the State Board meeting in November 2005.
- Keeping with the state chair's theme of "Strong Local Boards," every CFCRB chair was sent a survey to help determine the status of the organization and plan for the future. The results were discussed at the State Board meeting in November 2005.
- The 2005 Statewide Regional Conferences were conducted at nine locations statewide from August through October 2005.

Several other court-related initiatives currently under way to address timely permanence for children include:

- The continued expansion of Family Courts.
- The use of permanency mediation.
- Collaboration with the Cabinet for Health and Family Services to implement Kentucky's Program Improvement Plan.
- Developing a Dependency Law Clinic at each of the three Kentucky law schools for potential guardians *ad litem*.
- Judicial, guardian *ad litem* and cross-professional training.
- Developing procedures to expedite termination of parental rights appeals.

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Union, Webster*

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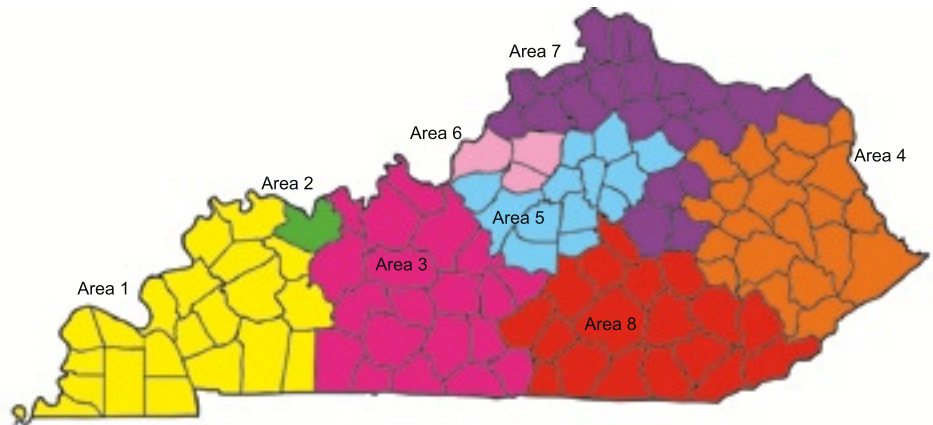
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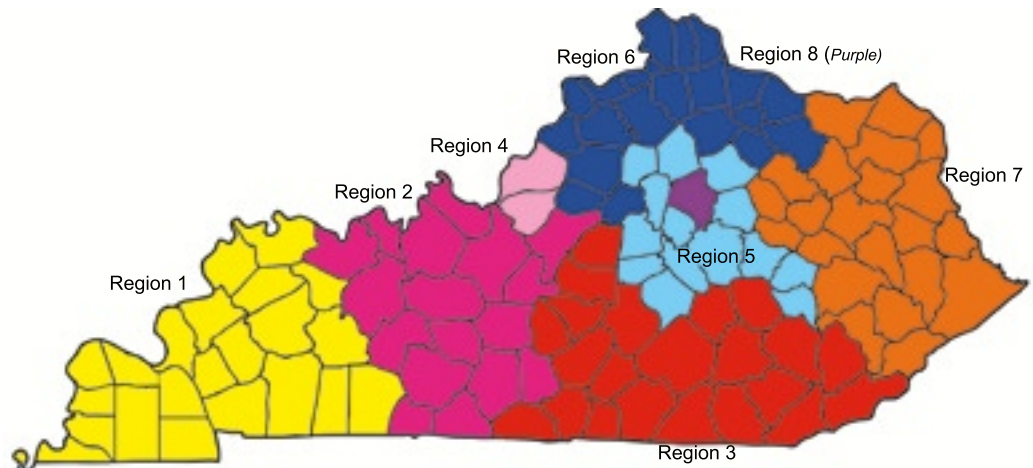
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Kentucky Citizen Foster Care Review Board

2005 Legislative Committee Recommendations

1. Support efforts to reduce the number of children who age out of the system and have not been provided with an adoptive or other permanent home.
2. Support policies and procedures that are designed to place sibling groups together in the least restrictive and most appropriate placement.
3. Promote more education in the area of child protection for all professionals in the juvenile court system.
4. Advocate to increase the quantity and improve the quality of treatment and support services for children and families.
5. Support the expansion of Family Court and increase the number of Family Court judges in Kentucky.
6. Support the implementation of the Recommendations of the Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care.
7. Continue to support collaborative efforts between the judiciary and the Cabinet for Health and Family Services.
8. Support legislation that would require official documentation of a child's release from foster care and increase the time from 14 to 45 days for the Cabinet for Health and Family Services to provide the courts with notice of intent to release a child from foster care.
9. Advocate to ensure that the Cabinet for Health and Family Services is providing the annual report of committed children as required by KRS 194A. This report should be submitted to the governor, the chief justice of the Supreme Court and the legislature by Dec. 1 of each year and contain the following information:
 - Number of children under an order of dependent, status, public and voluntary commitment according to permanency planning goals, current placement, average number of placements, type of commitment and the average length of time children remain committed.
 - Number of children in the custody of the Cabinet in residential placements and the average length of stay in those placements.
 - Number of children available for adoption and the number placed in adoptive homes.
 - What it costs in federal and state general funds to care for committed children.
10. Advocate to ensure the Cabinet for Health and Family Services is completing the Statewide Swift Adoption Report as required by KRS 199.565.
11. Support statewide Adoption Day efforts.
12. Monitor the progress of the reorganization of the Special Needs Adoption Program.
13. Continue to support and encourage participation of the Kentucky CFCRB in the Interested Party Review Process.



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